

# ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ELEMENT

## Objective of Element

As shown in Exhibit C-1, this element is intended to accomplish a number of things. First, public input is reviewed to identify problems and opportunities that residents collectively face. Second, some general issues are offered that constitute the basis of this plan. Next, socioeconomic characteristics are reviewed. Finally, population projections are presented that will be used in other elements to project the need for housing, project the need for land and to gauge the adequacy of transportation and community facilities.

### Exhibit C-1. Basic Objectives of the Issues and Opportunities Element

- Document the public input received relative to the issues and opportunities facing the community.
- Identify the key issues and opportunities that the plan revolves around.
- Understand some of the trends in the local economy and demographics.
- Present population projections that will be used throughout the plan.

## Identification of Issues and Opportunities

### Overview

The entire process of preparing a comprehensive plan is designed to identify and address issues and opportunities. Quite often issues and opportunities are readily evident, while others may not be apparent until data is collected, reviewed and shared with others and a dialogue begins. The importance of identifying issues and opportunities becomes evident when one reviews the goals and objectives contained in this plan. For each issue or opportunity identified, one or more goals and objectives are included to address the situation. By including corresponding background information, the reason for including the goal or objective will not be lost. Likewise, goals and objectives will not be included that are not grounded in an issue or opportunity facing the community. To identify the issues and opportunities that would guide the formation of this plan, a number of methods were employed: interviews, a community survey and community meetings.

### Interviews

Early in the planning process, the Town's consultant conducted more than 17 one-hour interviews with a wide range of individuals, including the following: representatives with the village of Cottage Grove, Town Board members, a school board representative, Plan Commission members and selected business leaders and citizens from the community. Issues identified in these interviews were incorporated into this plan and were also used to develop many of the questions for the community survey.

### Community Survey

During the fall of 2000, the Town's consultant conducted a written survey of Town residents to collect information about their opinions about a wide range of issues. The response rate of 65.5 percent shows that residents are concerned about the affairs of their community and are willing to offer their thoughts and ideas. Survey results were compiled and are included in Appendix C.

### Community Meetings

Community meetings were held throughout the planning process to solicit input and ideas from elected and appointed officials and residents. In all, 28 meetings were held with more

than 379 citizens in attendance. As each of the meetings averaged about two hours in length, there have been 758 citizen-hours put into this plan.

The meetings were conducted so that everyone (residents and Town employees and officials) could participate equally and openly. During several of these meetings, participants were asked to share their thoughts on various questions. To help prioritize the responses, participants were asked to vote for the most important items. The responses to the questions are shown below along with the number of votes each received. It should be noted that even though some items did not receive a vote, they are still very important considerations.

### **What are Some Positive Things About the Town?**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ farmland preservation (17)</li> <li>▪ managed growth to protect quality of life (16)</li> <li>▪ rural character (15)</li> <li>▪ location - Interstate and 12/18 (12)</li> <li>▪ good groundwater (12)</li> <li>▪ good schools (11)</li> <li>▪ wildlife preservation (10)</li> <li>▪ wetlands (9)</li> <li>▪ forested green space (9)</li> <li>▪ access to highways (8)</li> <li>▪ agricultural base (8)</li> <li>▪ close, but not too close (8)</li> <li>▪ volunteer ambulance service (8)</li> <li>▪ volunteer fire department (8)</li> <li>▪ start of TDR program (7)</li> <li>▪ business growth (7)</li> <li>▪ opportunity to plan with neighbors for coordinated growth (7)</li> <li>▪ maintain agricultural land (7)</li> <li>▪ free of landscape clutter (7)</li> <li>▪ lack of growth (7)</li> <li>▪ great neighbors (6)</li> <li>▪ low crime rate (6)</li> <li>▪ friendly to home businesses (6)</li> <li>▪ smallness of community (6)</li> <li>▪ quietness (6)</li> <li>▪ senior housing (5)</li> <li>▪ compatibility of agricultural with residential (5)</li> <li>▪ Drumlin Trail (5)</li> <li>▪ opportunity for commercial (5)</li> <li>▪ open spaces/land (5)</li> <li>▪ abundance of wildlife (5)</li> <li>▪ rural roads – walkable (5)</li> <li>▪ close to high-tech medical facilities (5)</li> <li>▪ quality of streams and creeks (4)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ well-maintained roads (4)</li> <li>▪ cleaner air (4)</li> <li>▪ varied landscape (4)</li> <li>▪ dark skies (3)</li> <li>▪ bike-friendly roads (3)</li> <li>▪ flora (3)</li> <li>▪ good agricultural cooperative (3)</li> <li>▪ good primary health care (3)</li> <li>▪ potential for good jobs (2)</li> <li>▪ big city opportunity in rural area (2)</li> <li>▪ close to cultural opportunities (2)</li> <li>▪ drumlins – gravel (2)</li> <li>▪ 4-H, soccer (2)</li> <li>▪ good police department (2)</li> <li>▪ variety of churches (2)</li> <li>▪ cooperative churches (2)</li> <li>▪ ability to determine own destiny (1)</li> <li>▪ opportunities for more public transportation (1)</li> <li>▪ maintain lifelong sports (1)</li> <li>▪ continued expansion of recreation opportunities (1)</li> <li>▪ less hectic pace (1)</li> <li>▪ fauna (1)</li> <li>▪ close to colleges (MATC, UW) (0)</li> <li>▪ citizen input/ideas (0)</li> <li>▪ lightening bugs (0)</li> <li>▪ golf course (0)</li> <li>▪ good veteran services (0)</li> <li>▪ equestrian opportunities (0)</li> <li>▪ assisted living (0)</li> <li>▪ pristine (the atmosphere-feeling) (0)</li> <li>▪ fairly reasonable speed zones (0)</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

### **What words or statements best describe the Town?**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ rural lifestyle</li> <li>▪ home</li> <li>▪ sanctuary</li> <li>▪ taxes</li> <li>▪ rich opportunities</li> <li>▪ great farms and neighborhoods</li> <li>▪ rural living</li> <li>▪ Village growth</li> <li>▪ friendly</li> <li>▪ clean air</li> <li>▪ wildlife</li> <li>▪ closeness</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ convenient location</li> <li>▪ family history</li> <li>▪ peaceful</li> <li>▪ interactive community</li> <li>▪ quiet</li> <li>▪ welcome</li> <li>▪ speeders</li> <li>▪ country meets city</li> <li>▪ peaceful country living</li> <li>▪ drumlins and wetlands</li> <li>▪ neighborly waves</li> <li>▪ storm water runoff – flooding</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ neighborly</li> <li>▪ rural beauty</li> <li>▪ active</li> <li>▪ 1840's</li> <li>▪ relaxed</li> <li>▪ open green spaces</li> <li>▪ frustration</li> <li>▪ no nighttime – light pollution</li> <li>▪ quiet refuge</li> <li>▪ good schools</li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|

**Note: No votes were taken on this question**

### *What are some problems that the Town faces?*

- What is appropriate amount of growth for town/village – impacts on others? (7)
- Gaining consensus on land use with other municipalities (4)
- Keeping agriculture viable (6)
- Better understanding of “rural character” (5)
- Agreements with neighbors – city/village infringement into rural areas – SPRAWL (5)
- Water/sewer services provided by the Town in the future? (5)
- Maintaining town identity – What services provided by which municipality? (5)
- Factory farms – Do we need some rules? (5)
- Where to put residential development/business development – should it be clustered? (4)
- Traffic (4)
- Monitor growth - How much do we want? At what point do we say “no more neighbors”? (4)
- Build out plan (TDR) number of development rights out there – receiving areas, where best areas are (3)
- Storm water management (Town and others) (3)
- Farmland preservation (3)
- Annexation powers and extraterritorial jurisdiction – not a level playing field (3)
- Problem of scattered developments (certified surveys – 35 acre lots) 3-4 2-acre lots (3)
- Density levels in residential development (in light of future water/sewer) (3)
- How do we compensate the farmer? Should not just be town – it’s a regional issue. How to fund PDR? (3)
- Preferred lot size in certain areas (2)
- Political component – changes in state law to be more accommodating to towns (2)
- 35 acre rule – (end up with 33 acres of weeds) (2)
- How to achieve “profitable” growth with least impact on agricultural land? (2)
- Attracting more businesses to Town (2)
- Successful implementation of TDR (2)
- 12/18 corridor – character and location of businesses? (1)
- Is there a place for regional public transit? (bus, rail, trail) (1)
- Parks/recreation planning (1)
- I-94 interchange – traffic/safety (1)
- Airport (existing impacts regarding noise, pollution, etc. flight patterns and emergency preparedness) (1)
- County plan impacts (road plan) (1)
- Policy for division of lots within existing subdivisions (1)
- Mixed-use development – maintaining local businesses (1)
- Controlled access on certain town roads (1)
- Conservation development – encouraging this type of development (1)
- Access to rail corridor (1)
- Impact of current trends – map this growth out 20 years (scenario visualization) (1)
- Historical perspective – What is unique? Maintain identity (0)
- Schools – growth impacts (0)
- Park dedication issue (0)
- Communication towers – siting policy (0)
- Mobile homes (0)
- Location of landfills (ordinance?) (0)
- Groundwater pollution – Map (from other municipalities also) (0)
- Building up, instead of out, given population projections and desire to preserve farmland (0)
- Controlling community activity in residential areas (0)
- Glacial Drumlin Trail – take better advantage - connections (0)
- Housing – balance, affordability (0)
- Think about our environmental corridors (Preservation) (0)
- Define/develop criteria for quality growth mix (0)
- Village is interested in compatible economic development issues (0)

## **General Overview**

Despite being near the Madison metropolitan area and the Village’s desire to grow aggressively, the Town wants to maintain its separate identity as a rural community dominated by agriculture and open areas.

Madison and surrounding cities are a dominant force in the area (economically, socially and politically) and creates many of the positive and negative features affecting the future of the Town. On the plus side, there is relatively low unemployment and plenty of high-paying jobs. On the negative side of the ledger, some people will find it increasingly difficult to afford a home in the Town and demand for developable land will grow and make it increasingly difficult to preserve the Town’s rural character.

Residents seem quite satisfied with the Town and the services it provides. More than 90 percent of the survey respondents indicated that they had “excellent” or “good” feelings about the Town.

### **Land Use**

Land use in the Town is dominated by agriculture and agricultural uses. Subdivisions are primarily located in the northern one-half of the Town and many are close to the village of Cottage Grove. Pressure has been increasing to convert agricultural and other open space areas for residential purposes. Most survey respondents feel that in the coming years, new residential units should be located next to the Village or next to an existing subdivision. Few

respondents support development in the rural areas. Conflicts between different types of land uses are few and generally not significant.

The Village Comprehensive Plan delineates areas of the Town for annexation and urban development. The Village is proposing a new “downtown” that is a very short distance from town lands. The Madison city limits have extended eastward to the Town’s boundary on the west. The Town has had a policy of permitting land divisions or “splits” on rural lands. Many of these “entitled” splits have occurred, but there are about 350 that have not been used as of April 2001.

A number of properties have been contaminated and are in various stages of environmental assessment and cleanup.

### **Environment**

The natural landscape is dominated by agricultural fields and woodlots of varying sizes. Environmental features such as wetlands and floodplain areas pose some limitations for development primarily to the east of the Village.

Aside from two small ponds, south of the Village, there are no significant open water bodies. Perennial and intermittent streams and drainage ditches drain much of the Town. Stormwater is a danger and some soil types have limitations for development.

Groundwater is plentiful throughout the Town and localized areas contain high levels of nitrates volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Agricultural activities and septic tank effluent are likely sources. The Town is located in an atrazine use prohibition area due to the presence of atrazine in some groundwater.

### **Population**

Over the last 10 years, the population of the Town has grown about 1.1 percent per year, which is higher than statewide growth and growth in a number of adjoining Towns. However, it grew at a lower rate when compared to the village of Cottage Grove, Dane County and the town of Sun Prairie. Households in the Town tend to have higher incomes and are somewhat older. Consistent with statewide and national trends, the average number of people in each household has been declining.

Based on results of the 2000 Community Survey, the majority of respondents would like the Town to continue to grow, but at a rate of 1.1 percent per year, or preferably less.

### **Housing**

Single-family homes predominate and homeownership is nearly universal. Home ownership has increased from 88 percent in 1990 (Census data) to 99 percent in 2000 (survey data). The majority of homes are located in subdivisions and the remainder are scattered throughout the more rural areas. Most homes are in excellent repair. Sixty percent of the homes are less than 40 years old.

Compared to many communities throughout the state, the Town has affordable housing based on a countywide standard. Based on established income/housing guidelines and results from the Community Survey, about 15 percent of the households could not afford a \$134,000 home and one-third could not afford a \$190,000 home. While the Town needs to be ever vigilant about housing affordability, the cost of housing in the Town is within reach of most individuals and families when compared to most other communities.

Housing opportunities for the elderly and those with special needs are limited in the Town, but plentiful in the area and especially in the Madison metropolitan area. Based on established guidelines, the Town would not qualify for many State and federal housing programs. It needs to work with Dane County to help low- and moderate-income residents with their housing needs.

## **Economy**

Most of the workers in the Town commute to the Madison area for employment. Dominant employment sectors include public administration, health care, education and retail trade. Workers in Dane County tend to have higher paying jobs than their counterparts in the same field in the rest of the state.

Survey respondents offered mixed support for economic development and an aversion to industrial development. Respondents also did not want the Town to buy and develop an industrial/business park.

## **Town Revenue & Value**

The Town receives revenue from a variety of sources. The primary method is from local tax levies. Other revenue comes from State Shared Revenue Payments and General Transportation Aids. Between 1998 and 2000, the amount received from shared revenue has declined by about 10 percent. Currently, residential properties account for 87 percent of the tax base. Since 1996, the residential component of the tax base has been growing, but at a slower pace than the industrial and commercial components.

## **Transportation**

I-90/94 traverses the northern boundary of the Town. The Town is bisected by CTH N, which interchanges with I-90/94 and I-94. STH 12/18 is a major east-west route leading to and from the Madison area. Given its proximity to Madison, residents are close to commercial air service and other modes of transportation. Amtrak service is available in Columbus. The city of Madison and Dane County are working together to develop and evaluate alternatives for improved transportation circulation in and around Madison. This includes roads for cars and trucks, improved commercial air service and rail passenger service.

Residents enjoy the Glacial Drumlin State Trail for bicycling, walking, snowmobiling and other recreational activities. Blackhawk Airfield is a privately owned airport in the Village that serves the general aviation needs of the area.

No traffic safety problems are evident in the road network. The limited traffic congestion occurs at peak periods.

## **Public Facilities**

The Town recently constructed a new facility for emergency services, including EMS, fire and police protection. The Town Hall is adequate, with the exception of a pressing need for a larger meeting room. The facilities for the road department are adequate now and for the foreseeable future. The Town has no public utilities, but a Madison Metropolitan Sewer interceptor is located in the very northwest corner of the Town.

## **Parks**

The Town owns a number of park areas totaling 26 acres. Most of these are developed, relatively small and generally serve small geographic areas. The Community Survey found that one-half of the respondents, felt that the Town should further develop its park system and that another one-half of the respondents did not use a park area in the last year. Survey respondents largely favored developing recreational facilities for passive recreation and non-organized activities.

## **Town Function**

The town of Cottage Grove is both a productive agricultural area and the home to a large non-agricultural population. Most of the non-agricultural population has moved into the Town within the last generation. It is still a Town of predominantly rural character, which is being threatened by development from within and expansions of the village of Cottage Grove and the city of Madison.

## Socio-Economic Characteristics

### Educational Levels

According to the 1990 Census, Town residents had more education beyond high school when compared to the entire state. About 8 out of 10 Town residents had at least a high school diploma,

which is similar to all of Dane County and much higher than for the state (Table C-1). About one-third of the Town residents had an advanced degree beyond high school compared to

38.5 percent for all of Dane County and 24.8 percent for the state. Given the proximity of the Town to the Madison job market, these findings are somewhat anticipated.

### Age of Residents

Table C-2 compares the ages of the residents in the Town during 1980 and 1990 and Exhibit C-2 graphically shows the change in proportions between these time periods. We see a decrease in the number of residents in the 34 and younger age bracket with a corresponding increase in adults 35 to 64.

The data suggests that during this period people moving into the Town were older without families and young adults were leaving, perhaps to attend college or to start their careers elsewhere.

**Table C-1. Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years and Over; Town of Cottage Grove, Dane County, and Wisconsin: 1990**

Highest Educational Level Attained	Town of Cottage Grove		Dane County	
	Persons	Percent	Percent	Wisconsin Percent
Not a High School Graduate	231	10.5	10.5	21.4
High School Graduate (including equivalency)	795	36.3	25.6	37.1
Some College, no degree	486	22.2	25.5	16.7
Associate Degree	251	11.5	8.7	7.1
Bachelor's Degree	328	15.0	18.9	12.1
Graduate or Professional Degree	101	4.6	10.9	5.6
Total	2,192	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: US Census of Population and Housing (Tape STF 3A)  
Note: The percent column may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

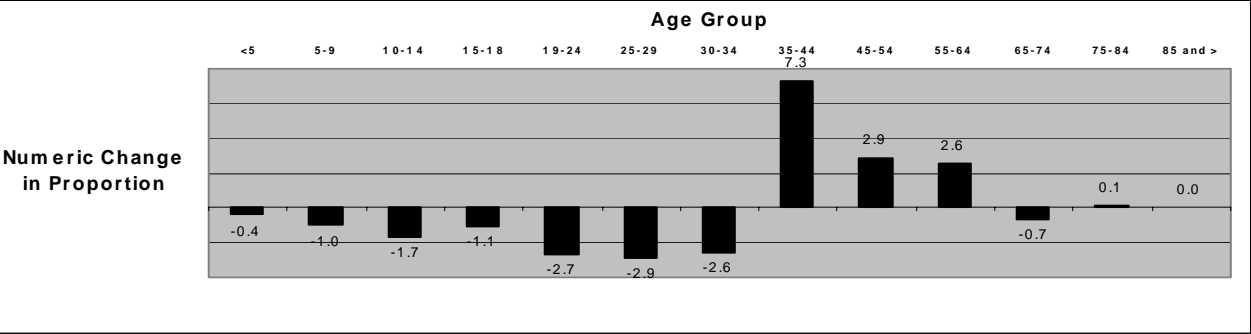
**Table C-2. Age of Population: 1980 and 1990**

Age Group	1980		1990	
	Persons	Percent	Persons	Percent
Under 5	282	9.6	323	9.2
5 to 9 years	230	10.1	321	9.1
10 to 14 years	305	10.3	302	8.6
15 to 18 years	222	7.5	224	6.4
19 to 24 years	209	7.1	155	4.4
25 to 29 years	326	11.0	285	8.1
30 to 34 years	316	10.7	286	8.1
35 to 44 years	434	14.7	774	22.0
45 to 54 years	247	8.4	398	11.3
55 to 64 years	176	6.0	304	8.6
65 to 74 years	96	3.3	91	2.6
75 to 84 years	38	1.3	49	1.4
85 years and older	4	0.1	5	0.1
Total	2,952	100.0	3,517	100.0

Source: US Census of Population and Housing (STF3A)

Note: The percent column may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Exhibit C-2. Numeric Change in Proportion of Residents By Age Class: Town of Cottage Grove: 1980 to 1990



Source: US Census of Population of and Housing (STF 3A)

Household Income

According to data from the 1990 Census, 80 percent of Town households had incomes between \$25,000 and \$75,000 compared to 60 percent for Dane County and 55 percent for the state (Table C-3).

Correspondingly, when compared to the county and state, the Town had as a proportion, fewer people making less than \$25,000.

During 1989, the median household income in the Town was substantially higher than in all of Dane County and in the state. Similarly, the per capita income was somewhat higher when compared to the state and lower than for the county (Table C-4).

Table C-3. Household Income; Town of Cottage Grove, Dane County, and Wisconsin: 1989

Income	Town of Cottage Grove		Dane County	Wisconsin
	Households	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than 15,000	63	5.5	19.2	23.4
15,000-24,999	140	12.2	17.2	18.7
25,000-34,999	165	14.4	16.8	17.4
35,000-44,999	236	20.6	14.7	14.7
45,000-54,999	234	20.5	11.3	10.0
55,000-74,999	227	19.8	11.8	9.6
75,000-99,999	54	4.7	5.1	3.6
100,000-124,999	12	1.0	1.6	1.2
125,000-149,999	13	1.0	0.9	0.5
150,000-or more	0	0	1.4	1.0

Source: US Census of Population and Housing (STF 3A)  
Note: The percent column may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Table C-4. Median Household Income and Per Capita Income; Town of Cottage Grove, Dane County, and Wisconsin: 1989

	Town of Cottage Grove	Dane County	Wisconsin
Median Household Income	\$43,462	\$32,703	\$29,442
Per Capita Income	\$14,772	\$15,542	\$13,276

Source: US Census of Population and Housing (STF 3A)

Obviously, the proximity of the Town to the Madison area is evident with the homogeneous demographic characteristics (age, education, etc.) and the relative abundance of good, high-paying jobs.

Results from the 2000 Community Survey (Question 46), show that about 35 percent of the households

in the Town are considered low and moderate income based on the household income and family size criteria established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

## Population Projections and this Plan

### Overview

Population change<sup>1</sup> in a community will have a significant impact on how a community fashions its comprehensive plan. While most communities share many goals in common, the needs of a fast growing community will likely be different than those of a community with a stable or declining population.

Projections can help determine how much land a community will need to allocate to different types of land uses in its overall development plan. They can also be used to help assess the changes that may be required in the housing stock, transportation networks, recreational and school facilities and similar public and private facilities. And finally, projections can be used to help assess the changes that may occur to the community's character, local economy, agricultural land base and the natural environment.

Although population projections are an important tool, a word of caution is in order. Projecting population change is best done on a large geographic scale. As the geographic area becomes smaller, it becomes increasingly more difficult to project into the future with a high degree of certainty. The loss of a single major employer, for example, can significantly reduce a small community's population. Likewise, a policy change by the Town Board can boost a community's growth. This is why it will be necessary to periodically review the population projections this plan is based on, to ensure that they reflect current conditions and ever changing demographic trends.

### Department of Administration Population Projections

As a starting point in developing population projections for this plan, the projections developed by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) in 1993 were reviewed (Table C-5). As shown, the DOA anticipated relatively strong growth in Dane County throughout the period bringing the total population to nearly 472,000 in 2015. Between 1995 and 2000, the population growth translates into a growth rate of about 1.4 percent. After that, the growth rate gradually declines to about 0.9 percent in the last five years of the projections.

For the Town, DOA anticipated a stronger growth rate than for the County as a whole. Between 1995 and 2000, DOA anticipated a growth rate of 1.9 percent. Following that, the growth rate declines to 1.3 percent per year.

### Historical Population Change

Since the DOA published its population estimates, the Census Bureau completed the 2000 census of population. Table C-6 compares the historical growth of the Town with selected municipalities in the area, the county and the state between 1990 and 2000.

**Table C-5. Department of Administration Population Projections; Town of Cottage Grove and Dane County: 1995 through 2015**

	<b>Town of Cottage Grove</b>	<b>Dane County</b>
<b>Total Population</b>		
1990 <sup>1</sup>	3,525	367,085
1995 <sup>2</sup>	3,830	393,236
2000 <sup>2</sup>	4,133	416,088
2005 <sup>2</sup>	4,416	436,646
2010 <sup>2</sup>	4,659	454,699
2015 <sup>2</sup>	4,908	471,823
<b>Percent Change from Previous Time Period</b>		
1995 to 2000	1.9	1.4
2000 to 2005	1.7	1.4
2005 to 2010	1.3	1.0
2010 to 2015	1.3	0.9

Notes: 1. 1990 Census – Bureau of the Census  
2. Wisconsin Department of Administration (1993)

<sup>1</sup> Population change is a function of natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration (out-migration minus in-migration).



The population of Dane County grew at a substantially faster rate than the state as a whole. Much of the growth in the County has occurred in and around Madison. Between 1990 and 2000, the Town's population grew by 314 residents representing an annual growth rate of about 0.86 percent. This rate of change is significantly lower than for the towns of Deerfield and Sun Prairie. The Village grew the fastest with an annual average growth rate of 13.6 percent.

**Table C-6. Population Change; Town of Cottage Grove, Selected Municipalities, Dane County, and Wisconsin: 1990 to 2000**

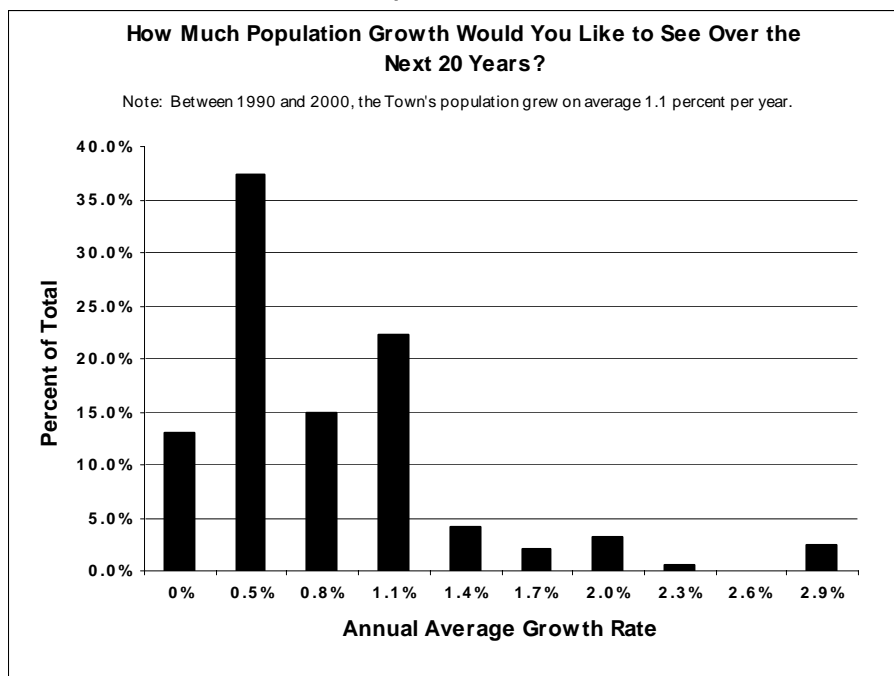
	Population		Numeric	Percent	Average
	1990 <sup>1</sup>	2000 <sup>2</sup>	Change <sup>3</sup>	Change <sup>3</sup>	Annual Compound Growth Rate <sup>3</sup>
<b>Town of Cottage Grove</b>	3,525	3,839	314	8.91	0.86%
<b>Town of Blooming Grove</b>	2,079	1,768	- 311	- 14.96	- 1.60%
<b>Town of Deerfield</b>	1,181	1,470	289	24.47	2.20%
<b>Town of Madison</b>	6,442	7,005	563	8.74	0.84%
<b>Town of Sun Prairie</b>	1,839	2,308	469	25.50	2.30%
<b>Village of Cottage Grove</b>	1,131	4,059	2,928	258.89	13.6%
<b>Dane County</b>	367,085	426,526	51,893	16.19	1.50%
<b>Wisconsin</b>	4,891,769	5,363,675	471,906	9.65	0.93%

Notes: <sup>1</sup> 1990 Census – Bureau of the Census  
<sup>2</sup> 2000 Census – Bureau of the Census  
<sup>3</sup> Between 1990 and 2000

### Expected Population Change

A question was included in the Community Survey to gauge resident preferences about population growth. By way of background a note was included in the survey question, that stated that the Town grew 1.1 percent on an annual basis between 1990 and 2000. That rate of growth was based on population estimates for 2000. As it turned out, the Census found that the Town grew at a slower rate – about 0.86 percent per year. Regardless, residents showed a strong preference for a rather slow growth rate (Exhibit C-3). About 88 percent of the respondents favored growth that did not exceed the stated

**Exhibit C-3. Preference for Future Population Growth: 2000**



Source: 2000 Community Survey

growth rate of 1.1 percent.

Survey responses were also analyzed for different groups to see if the results differed. The following groups were analyzed: farmers, those living in subdivisions, those who have lived in the Town for 10 years or less and those between the age of 41 to 60. While there was some variation in the results, each of the groups mirrored the overall results.

The preferred rate of population growth depends on many factors -- some of which the Town can influence in varying degrees. Consistent with the overall approach of this plan as expressed in the goals and objectives, the Town envisions growing at a rate of 0.8 percent per year on average over the next 20 years. This means that the projected population of the Town in 2020 will be 4,502 residents, representing a net increase of 663 residents (Table C-7).

**Table C-7. Population Projections: 2000 to 2020**

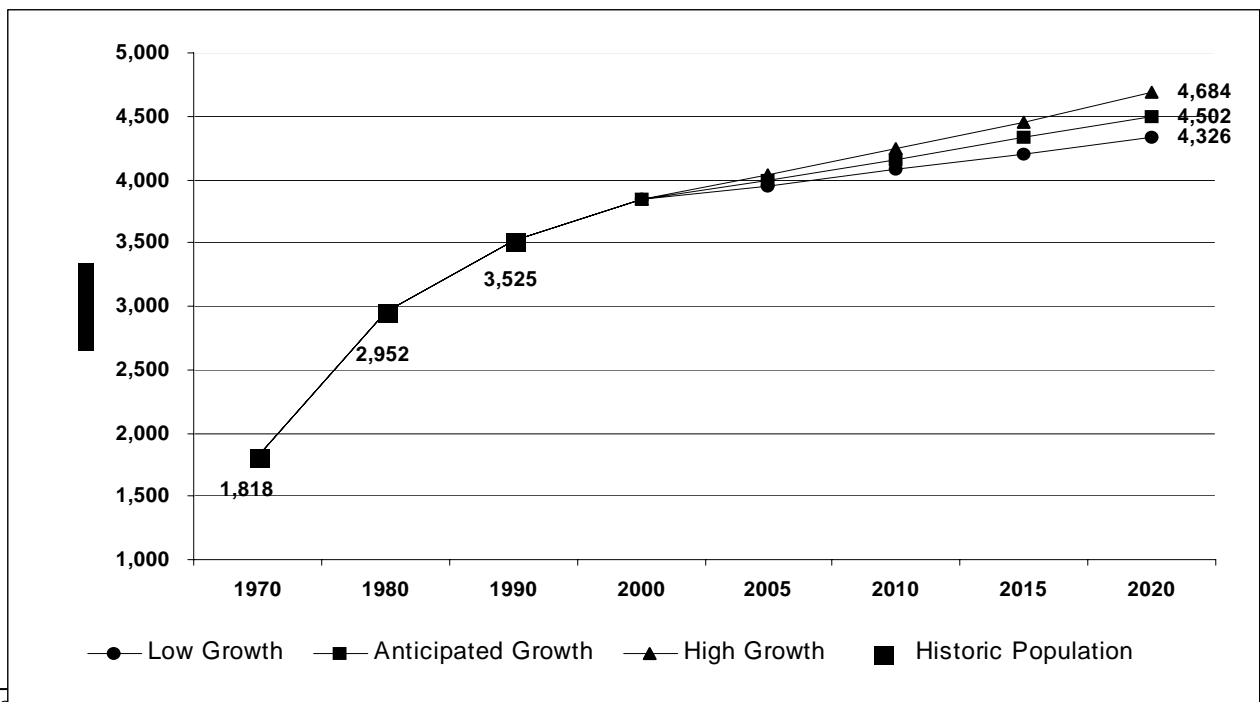
	Year	Low Growth <sup>1</sup>	Anticipated Growth <sup>2</sup>	High Growth <sup>3</sup>
<b>Population</b>	2000 <sup>4</sup>	3,839	3,839	3,839
	2005 <sup>5</sup>	3,955	3,995	4,035
	2010 <sup>5</sup>	4,075	4,157	4,241
	2015 <sup>5</sup>	4,199	4,326	4,457
	2020 <sup>5</sup>	4,326	4,502	4,684
<b>Population Added During Period</b>	2000 to 2005	116	156	196
	2005 to 2010	120	162	206
	2010 to 2015	124	169	216
	2015 to 2020	127	176	227
	2000 to 2020	487	663	845

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Notes 1 Low growth is based on an annual compound growth rate of 0.6 percent.  
 2 Anticipated growth is based on an annual rate of 0.8 percent.  
 3 High growth is based on an annual rate of 1.0 percent.  
 4 Population count.  
 5 Population projection.

Given the imprecise nature of population projections, projections for a low growth rate and high growth rate are also shown for comparison purposes. Over the next 20 years, a change in the annual average growth rate of 0.2 percent from the anticipated growth rate translates into a variation of 358 residents (176 for a low growth rate and 182 for the high growth rate).

**Exhibit C-4. Population Projections: 2000 to 2020**



## Key Issues and Opportunities

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Many residents are proud to call the town of Cottage Grove home, but at the same time recognize that there are a number of problems and opportunities that they collectively face as residents of the Town. This plan is designed to help focus the collective energy of residents, elected officials and Town employees and offer a blueprint for the physical, economic and cultural growth of the Town.

This plan is based on the basic premise that the Town must actively work to foster appropriate growth. This includes economic growth, physical growth and cultural growth. Although this plan outlines a broad range of community needs, the Town will not be directly responsible for doing everything. In the absence of a concerted effort of Town residents, employees and officials, the Town will likely lose many of its characteristics that current residents cherish.

As previously noted, a wide variety of issues and opportunities were identified throughout the planning process. The most important can be summarized with the following set of questions.

How does the town of Cottage Grove:

- Encourage sustainability of the agricultural base?
- Maintain the current social character of the community that current residents cherish as the Town continues to grow in the coming years?
- Provide the necessary infrastructure to accommodate growth so that current taxpayers are not substantially burdened with new or higher taxes?
- Accommodate the special housing needs of residents – especially the elderly and low- and moderate-income residents?
- Accommodate additional residential development?
- Provide for amenities and public infrastructure that the tax base can support?
- Work with the village of Cottage Grove in a cooperative manner?
- Encourage the appropriate types of commercial and business development in keeping with the Town's agricultural base and rural character?
- Protect important natural resources?
- Implement the Transfer of Development Rights program?

## Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Recommendations

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The goals, objectives, policies and recommendations for this element are found in Chapter B.